C. REMARKS

In the above-noted Office Action, claims 1, 2, and 8-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by Schrempf U.S. Patent 6,412,799. Additionally, claims 3-7 and 12-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 by Schrempf. With this Amendment, Applicant amends prior independent claims to include the limitations provided in prior dependent claims 9 and 15. Additionally, Applicants make other changes to the claims and present new claims 20 and 21. Re-examination and reconsideration of the non-allowable claims are respectfully requested.

Applicants have amended the specification to address the objections noted in paragraph 2 and 3 of the Office Action. Applicants have also amended the Application to address the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 in claim 7 and 8. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for pointing out such errors.

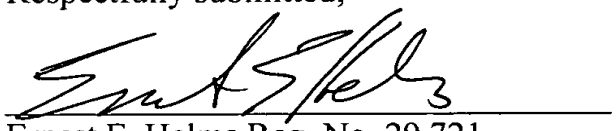
Applicants respectfully submit that Schrempf does not teach, disclose or make obvious Applicants' invention as brought forth by the amended claims. As noted by the Examiner, Schrempf does in column 3, line 63-67, disclose a running board will fit integral bracket. However, Applicants respectfully submit that Schrempf does not teach, disclose or make obvious how to make such a running board with the features of Applicants' invention. 1, 2, and 8, it is clearly apparent that the Schrempf bracket shown in the illustrations and as described in the specification is a metallic bracket. This is revealed by not only the crosshatching, but the thinness of the bracket relative to the remainder of the running board. The thinness of the bracket is best shown on Figure 8. Since the Schrempf bracket 30 is made from a metallic material, it has enhanced strength characteristics which are not shared by a running board integral polymeric bracket. The mount projection 24 of Schrempf's running board has a pair of converging walls 58. If one skillman art attempted to manufacture a running board as Schrempf with integral brackets 30 which were polymeric, unacceptable stresses would be generated due to the convergent geometry.

Applicants wish to bring forth a running board with an integral bracket which does not require the use of metal and brings forth the greatest strength with the lightest weight. Accordingly, Applicants bring forth an inventive integral bracket which has a channel configuration. The channel configuration of Applicants' integral bracket provides in a preferred embodiment four supportive webs which are continuous

integral with transverse webs of the platform. This configuration maximizes strength of the assembly. The continuous configuration makes the running board assembly to be molded in a single draw line mold assembly. Additionally, Applicants bring forth a running board bracket configuration which maximizes strength due to its channel configuration while minimizing the lateral thickness (with respect to the vehicle) of the bracket. This can best be shown by a review of Applicants' invention as best shown in Figures 3 and 4. Furthermore, Schrempf does not teach or disclose a thickening of the transverse weld in an area wherein there are continuous with the web of the bracket as does Applicants' invention provide as defined in claim 21, Figure 6 and paragraph 31. Additionally, there is no water drainage as provided by Applicants' invention noted by aperture 63 in Figure 3 which allows for the drainage of precipitation which is very important when the vehicle is used inclement climates where ice can gather and expand and put undue stresses upon the bracket adjacent to the bracket platform interface.

By this amendment, Applicant has shown wherein the Examiner's rejections are respectively traversed. As the application is otherwise in condition for allowance, such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Ernest E. Helms Reg. No. 29,721
DYKEMA GOSSETT PLLC
39577 Woodward Avenue, Suite 300
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304-2820
(248) 203-0756
Attorneys for Applicants

Dated: September 29, 2003

BH01\427830.1
ID\EEHE